



# Michigan Milk Producers Association

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Members of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture  
Members of the Senate Agriculture & Bioeconomy Committee

Dear Committee Members:

On behalf of the nearly 2,300 members of Michigan Milk Producers Association, we are writing to express our support for Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 24 which disapproves Executive Order No. 2009-45.

The Executive Order removes the current authority of the Commission of Agriculture to oversee the Department of Agriculture and hire the director of the department.

While we agree that our state government needs to make changes in order to operate as efficiently as possible, we do not believe the transfer of this authority in any way improves efficiency of state government. In fact, we strongly believe that this approach will negatively impact the strongest, most viable industry in Michigan's struggling economy.

At this time of economic distress, agriculture remains one of the shining gems of our state. The diversity of products grown is second to California, and many of our individual commodities, including milk production, rank in the top ten nationally for production. We believe the current structure of MDA and the Ag Commission is a major reason why agricultural output, food manufacturing and ethanol production is a \$71 billion business with over one million jobs.

The industry has risen to this level by having a process that allows the Ag Commission to operate as a public body with oversight and accountability functions. This process has served the agriculture industry well for decades. It has helped strengthen ties between the agriculture sector and government allowing for continuity and consistency of programs.

MMPA's delegate body has had a long-standing resolution that supports "steps be taken to maintain the system whereby the Governor appoints the members of the Commission, and the Commission, in turn, appoints the director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture."

We are deeply concerned about the risk that the Executive Order creates for the future of Michigan agriculture. Removing the critical public oversight does nothing to impact the state budget situation or improve efficiency. The change denies the transparency and accountability that the people of Michigan deserve.

Sincerely,

Ken Nobis  
President

John Dilland  
General Manager